(a) the present status of four-laning of NH-58 from Meerut to Muzaffarnagar;

(b) whether the project is running in time and would be completed in a time bound manner;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the measures taken by Government to ensure that the work is completed in time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) to (e) The work of four laning of Meerut-Muzaffarnagar section, which is from km. 52.250 to 131.000, of NH-58 is in progress under National Highway Development Project (NHDP) Phase-III on Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis. The overall physical progress is 58% and efforts are being made to complete the project within targeted date of completion *i.e.* by March, 2009.

Modernisation of ports

1982. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps Government proposes to take for modernizing Indian ports to make them world-class; and

(b) the extent of expenditure proposed to be incurred towards this objective during 2008-09 and the following two final years during the Eleventh plan?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) With the objective to upgrade and modernize port infrastructure in India to enable it to benchmark its performance against global standards, a National Maritime Development Programme (NMDP) has been formulated by the Department of Shipping. Under the programme, specific projects to be taken up for implementation over a definite period have been identified. Total investment involved is Rs. 1,00,339.00 crores. Out of this, Rs. 55,800.00 crores is for the Port Sector. Of the investment proposed in the Port Sector, Rs. 34,505.00 crores is expected from private sector mainly for commercially viable projects like development/operation of berths, terminals etc. Public funds will be concentrated for creation of common user infrastructure facilities. In the Major Ports 276 projects covering the entire gamut of activities, namely, construction/upgradation of berths, deepening of channels, rail-road connectivity projects, equipment upgradation/modernization schemes and other related schemes for creation of back-up facilities have been identified for inclusion in the programme.

(b) Under the NMDP, these projects are planned to be taken up over a period up to 2011-12 and will be implemented in phases. The Phase-I covering the period from 1.4.2005 to 31.3.2009 would entail investment to the tune of Rs. 31,970.85 crores. The Phase-II covering the period beyond Phase-I and up to 2011-12 would have projects costing Rs. 23,832.88 crores. During 2008-09, the expenditure proposed by the Government and Major Ports on Plan projects of Major Ports is Rs. 1386.52 crores.